CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

I D E A

OF UNITING THE

RIVERS THAMES AND SEVERN

THROUGH

CIRENCESTER,

WITH SOME

OBSERVATIONS

ON OTHER INTENDED CANALS.

LONDON:
1782.

BIBLIOTECA REALE

CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

EXPERIENCE has ſufficiently demonſtrated the general utility of inland navigations to the landed and trading intereſts of Great Britain, by facilitating extenſive circulation, and encreaſing thereby the inland as well as the foreign trade of the kingdom.

Populous counties, where great manufactures are eſtabliſhed, naturally conſume many of the neceſſaries of life beyond their own means of ſupply, whence ariſes a beneficial intercourſe with other counties, having for its object an exchange of the produce of the earth, between the diſtricts of manufacture and thoſe where tillage, and other improvements of man's labour form the occupation of their inhabitants.

Every improvement therefore which has for its object the moſt remote tendency to enlarge or extend ſuch intercourſe, tends directly to the employment of our people, which is but another word for the population, riches, and ſtrength of the nation. We cannot therefore in this place omit to obſerve, how impolitic, unwiſe, and oppoſite to every principle

of juſtice and general proſperity of the ſtate, would have been the late propoſed tax on carriage by land and by navigations; and how ruinous in its conſequences, when we conſider ſuch a tax as acting not only on the produce of labour, but on the very means which are to carry that labour into effect; ſuch a regulation would wound ſtill deeper by acting as a bar to all future improvements; for by diviſing the cheapeſt rates of carriage the faculties of countries are raiſed from a ſtate of torpor into activity; from a ſtate of death to life; coal and other mines are wrought; limeſtone, chalk, flints, ſand, gravel, and every exiſting atom, is rendered of value by the cheapneſs of conveyance to diſtant parts. Timber, and all other bulky and heavy materials, acquire a new price by the means of carrying them to a market; from all theſe circumſtances, and many more, a variety of other advantages encreaſe the abilities of the inhabitants of diſtant counties, and enable them to go into improvements yet unthought of, and create that general change in the face of a country, which ſo conſpicuouſly characterizes the difference between an active and inactive ſtate of ſociety.

In a populous part of the county of Glouceſter, about ſeven years ago, a number of manufacturers and others, ſituated on the banks of the river Stroud, laboured under the diſadvantage of a high price of coals, which induced them to unite in executing a navigable canal from the river Severn to the town of Stroud, by which, ſince its completion, an annual ſaving has taken place to the amount of five thouſand pounds in the article

ticle of fuel, to the great benefit of the valuable branches of woollen and dying manufacture, and to the comfort of the poorer claſſes of the inhabitants of that part of the county. The conſideration of ſuch benefits ariſing from a navigation of ſo ſmall an extent as eight miles, may induce us to form ideas highly favourable of a propoſal of extending it to the Thames, by which thoſe two great rivers will be united. This union has for its object a connection between the Weſt of England, and the counties of Glouceſter, Berks, Wilts, and a part of Oxfordſhire on the Thames, where fuel is now ſo ſcarce as hardly to come within the abilities of the lower claſſes of the people.

The junction of the Thames and Severn is no new idea, it was diſcuſſed many years ago, and was deemed a probable conſequence of the Stroud navigation when that was undertaken, as being a part of the moſt eligible line of communication between thoſe two rivers.

In 1781, a meeting of the county of Glouceſter was adverti ſed to promote this deſign; that meeting produced ſubſequent ones, and a ſubſcription was entered into, to forward the undertaking under the direction of a committee.

This committee have cauſed ſurveys to be made of the country between Lechlade and Severn by experienced engineers, who have uniformly perſiſted in a favourable opinion of this line of junction through Cirenceſter, founding their opinions on a certainty of an ample ſupply of water, and on the circumſtances of the ſmalleſt poſſible damage to lands, mills,

mills, &c. and on the ſuperior quantity of tunage, which may be expected to fall into this line above any other. However doubts having been raiſed on the preference of the line through Cheltenham by ſome gentlemen of Worceſterſhire, they have at their own expence taken levels from Tewkſbury through Cheltenham to Lechlade, by which it appears that the Cheltenham line will be far more expenſive, as well in its extent, as on account of its greater fall and conſequent lockage; from the number of mills that will be affected; the danger of frequent want of water on its ſummit; the many aqueducts which muſt be made; and a tunnel but little leſs than that neceſſary on the other line. When we add to all theſe circumſtances, that ſuch line would loſe the trade of the populous part of the county of Glouceſterſhire, Briſtol and South Wales, &c. gentlemen whoſe public ſpirit may induce them to launch out in the undertaking, will act with prudence to conſider well, whether the excluſion of ſuch coal trade from the mines near Briſtol, South Wales, and the foreſt of Dean, together with the Briſtol trade, the founderies in Wales, and the trade of the extenſive river Wye, are not of themſelves objects of very great weight in the ſcale, when their intereſt as proprietors, and the public intereſt are conſidered as moſt materially affected, in the compariſon of the line of navigation through Stroud and that through Cheltenham, to the evident prejudice of the latter.

The line of junction with the Severn out of the reach of Briſtol and the river Wye, is certainly ineligible, independent of

of the extraordinary expence, becauſe the trade we have mentioned cannot be ſecured to an inland navigation to join the Thames, againſt the ſtream of the river Severn which is rough and rapid, and at all times navigated with great difficulty, and frequently not without danger.

In order to throw ſome light on the general topic of undertakings in navigation, it ſeems not to be foreign to our purpoſe, to enter into a ſhort detail of ſome that are at preſent under agitation.

The county of Oxford, by that extended canal which paſſes through it, has a plentiful ſupply of coals from the Warwickſhire mines.

If the Leceiſterſhire mines near Oakthorp are alſo carried into the Oxford canal, (a very eligible ſcheme now in agitation) the counties of Warwick, Northampton, and Oxford, being the line of that navigation can never need a more plentiful ſupply of fuel, or wiſh it upon more reaſonable terms.

The plan propoſed to Parliament laſt ſeſſions, for extend-tending the Coventry canal to the coal mines near Birmingham, rather puzzles us to find out its uſe or public neceſſity.

At a very full meeting of the county of Warwick in 1781, after debating the ſubject for many hours, its utility not being ſhewn, the ſcheme did not meet with the approbation of the meeting.

After this, no ſecond meeting of the county having taken place, ſome individuals in Birmingham undertook to promote it, and ſucceeded ſo far as to carry a bill into parliament;

but if the object of the promoters are not different from the benefits which the ſubſcribers, or public can receive from its execution, when peoples minds cool, and prudence determines their choice, their ardour will diminiſh, unleſs the peculiar ſpirit of oppoſition, and the ſecret intereſt of a few, can keep it alive. In times when money is ſo ſcarce to carry on uſeful improvements, it is amazing how rapidly the ſubſcription filled to execute this undertaking; but our wonder will ceaſe when we conſider how much peoples minds have been raiſed by expected advantages.

The allurement took riſe from the fortunate ſucceſs to the intereſts of the proprietors of the preſent Birmingham navigation. It was ſuppoſed the new intended undertaking would be equally ſucceſsful, and under ſuch expectations men ſubſcribed their *L.* 100, concluding they ſhould receive another *L.* 100, by premium, on the ſale of a ſhare when the act to execute the canal had paſſed. It is apprehended the ſtate of facts to induce men to this undertaking have not been truly ſtated, or duly conſidered.

Birmingham is a limited market, which uſes annually a limited quantity of coals; it is already connected by a navigation with the coal mines which fully ſupply its demand; the amount of the tunnage of its coals is publicly known, which we may ſuppoſe will be divided into two parts, one from the new attainable coal mines, and the other from the preſent mines, when the new navigation ſhall have taken place; the unavoidable conſequence will be, that neither ſet of proprietors,

tors, viz. thoſe of the old, nor thoſe of the new canal, from the new explored mines will find an intereſt for their monies; the one for that already expended, and the other for that ſum of money which they will expend to compleat their new canal. The extention of the Birmingham to the Coventry canal is ſtill a leſs intereſting object. It is not carrying coals to Newcaſtle, but it is intended to carry coals into the Coventry canal, which has extenſive coal mines on its banks, and its further objects have ſtill a worſe tendency, by attempting to injure the tunnage of other canals leading from the navigable parts of the river Trent to Birmingham.

It can have only one object in coal, viz. to reduce one gentleman's property in mines, and to raiſe anothers; but that would not promote the intereſt of the navigation, becauſe if the Leiceſterſhire canal takes place, coal, as good in quality as the Birmingham, will paſs into the Oxford navigation, and at a much lower rate, than they can be brought from the mines near Birmingham. Theſe mines to which this new ſcheme of navigation is intended to extend, are moſtly the property of a few rich men, and not very extenſive; ſhould a combination take place between theſe gentlemen, or their mines, by any contingencies, be ſtopped from working; or ſhould they become exhauſted; in all ſuch caſes, it is moſt likely that the canal would not pay intereſt; but whenever the Leiceſter canal ſhould be executed, it would amount to the total annihilation of the ſum expended by the undertakers of this new canal.

As the preſent Birmingham canal has a communication with the general canals, now made in a Southern direction, it muſt be ſuppoſed that very little tunnage beſides coal will paſs upon the intended new Birmingham canal; and by ſearching into the ſituation of theſe mines, of which this new plan is the object, it will appear that the ſmall extenſion of the preſent Birmingham canal, petitioned for in the laſt ſeſſions of parliament, with ſome further powers granted to the company, will enable theſe Birmingham mines to paſs to the public markets, along the preſent canals through Staffordſhire, and down the Severn, and through the junction of the Thames and Severn, if it riſes into effect, at as low an expence as along the new intended canal from Birmingham to Coventry, were it perfected. From theſe facts it will appear, that the conſideration of parliament, is not how any private gentleman's coal mine ſhall get to a market, but to conſider cautiouſly whether the land neceſſarily deſtroyed by ſuch an undertaking, and whether the waters diverted from their mills, ſo uſeful and valuable in manufactures, and the money expended on ſuch undertakings, may not be more uſefully employed; the whole well viewed and weighed againſt the benefits, which the public may receive by the completion of any propoſed new plan of navigation; and further how maturely objects and ſchemes ſhould be inquired into by the public, and by parliament, the guardians of our property, before they grant powers to cut new navigations in oppoſition to each other, which may ſerve

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no one good end, but on the contrary cauſe prejudice to individuals by unneceſſary jarring of intereſts.

To paſs from theſe objects to the junction: the river Severn is a free navigation, attended with ſo little expence that bargemen going down the river, ſell their coals at Stroud at the ſame price they do at Glouceſter, with the ſole addition of the tunnage duty paid on the Stroud canal, which being at preſent local to Stroud, and its neighbourhood alone, is fixed at a high rate; but at the laſt meeting at Cirenceſter aſſurances were given by ſome proprietors of the Stroud navigation, that in caſe an extenſion of the canal to Lechlade ſhould take place, the tunnage price ſhould be reduced to the ſatisfaction of the undertakers of the junction, and no doubt but at ſome future general meeting, meaſures will be concluded upon for that purpoſe; the Stroud company being ſufficiently ſenſible of their own intereſt to make ſome offer calculated to encourage the undertaking. This obſervation being premiſed, two queſtions ſeem to ariſe which deſerve conſideration, firſt, What are the grounds to induce a ſet of proprietors to apply to parliament for a power to complete the junction of the Thames and Severn? On what terms is it prudent for ſubſcribers to embark in an undertaking of this magnitude?

To anſwer the firſt queſtion, we will conſider the probable trade which may ariſe from a communication opened. The extent of the new communication would be between the counties of Shrewſbury, Stafford, Worceſter, Warwick, Glouceſ-

ter, Hereford, all Wales, Berks, Wiltſhire, Oxfordſhire, Surry, and Middleſex, all containing a great population, a rich produce in grain, and other fruits of the earth of the moſt uſeful kinds, together with the moſt extenſive manufactures of all kinds in the world, which would be immediately connected by a conveyance of ſmall expence with the mart of London by the junction of Thames and Severn.

We could in this place enter into a detail of the particulars which would conſtitute the tunnage of ſuch a canal, from the information of men of experience, but we think that in matters of this kind, it may be ſafer to give an idea compounded of their different eſtimates, and ſuch as may not appear too ſanguine. We therefore may only venture an opinion, that there are good grounds to eſtimate the future tunnage of the junction at twenty five thouſand tuns efficient tunnage *per annum*. Various eſtimates of the expenditure, neceſſary to the completion of theſe 30 miles, appeared before the meeting at Cirenceſter, founded on different ſcales of executing the canal. It was urged by ſome that the ſcale on which the Stroud canal is made, was unneceſſarily large, would be dangerous in the tunnel, and that a conſiderable ſaving would enſue from adopting a ſmaller ſcale, capable of admitting the Thames boats, or even ſmaller canal boats. It was ſaid to be founded on a known fact, that the Severn conſtruction of boats cannot navigate the Thames, nor paſs its locks, that therefore all goods muſt be ſhifted upon the canal from the Severn boats to the Thames boats, and ſo *vice verſa*;

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and that the navigation executed on the ſcale for Thames boats, would be a leſs expence to the undertakers than that for the Severn boats by *L.* 20,000. On this idea which appeared the prevalent one, the ſcale of a canal to convey Thames boats was maintained for the completion of the junction; and accordingly an eſtimate of *L.* 112,000 caſh advanced, may be conſidered as a ſum of expenditure nearly equal to the undertaking.

The ſecond queſtion by its nature depending on calculations, which can only be founded on a variety of future contingencies, ſeems to admit of barely a probable anſwer.

The eſtimate of the completion of the navigation from Stroud to Lechlade, has been formed by the engineers at *L.* 112,000. On the ſcale of admitting only the Thames boats; the probable term to complete the navigation may be eſtimated at 6 years. As the monies would be advanced by yearly inſtalments, ſomewhat leſs than 3 years intereſt will be incurred, we may ſay about *L.* 15,000; and compute the whole future coſt at the round ſum of *L.* 130,000. The intereſt of this ſum at 5 *per cent.* is *L.* 6500 *per annum*.—We may allow *L.* 2000 *per annum*, for expences and repairs, errors of various kinds, and unforeſeen accidents, which will bring the neceſſary annual expenditure to *L.* 8500 *per annum*, and 25000 tuns of efficient tunnage at 3d *per* tun *per* mile, would produce about *L.* 9000 *per annum*.

It muſt be obſerved, that in all navigations there is a neceſſity of regulating the tunnage according to a great variety

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of circumſtances, ariſing from the nature and qualities of the things to be tranſported; by far the greater proportion on ſuch a navigation, could not afford above one penny *per* mile, and a very ſmall proportion of valuable light goods ſo high a rate as three pence *per mile*; further a great proportion of the tunnage of the canal, would paſs a part only of the whole diſtance both coming and going; for theſe reaſons, and from theſe various conſiderations, we thought it neceſſary to form ſome probable eſtimate of an efficient tunnage, paſſing through the whole length of the canal at a medium price, with reference to the circumſtances which we have related. This opinion we give with diffidence, at the ſame time, we think it does not appear probable that it can be done for leſs, or even that it would be prudent for ſubſcribers to embark in an undertaking of this magnitude on lower terms, conſidering the general riſk of ſucceſs, not to mention the many unforeſeen difficulties, which muſt and will ariſe in the proſecution of works of this nature, eſpecially in the tunnel, where probable conjecture can be the only preſent guide whereby to eſtimate the future ſucceſs of this part of the undertaking.

It is worthy of obſervation, that works of this kind are found frequently to ſuffer moſt in their execution, from the limited views of individuals of circumſcribed abilities, or ſuch who have not ſpare time, or others who want induſtry to forward ſuch undertakings; it were to be wiſhed on this account that a ſmall number of men of liberal minds, and good fortunes, were found to become ſubſcribers, and thereby ſureties

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to the legiſlature for the accompliſhment of this junction. A ſmall number of men of ſuch a deſcription, would evidently run no riſk in becoming ſubſcribers at *L.* 5 or *L.* 10,000 each; and as by an act of parliament the intereſt of the undertakers, and the public would be ſufficiently guarded, it would be indifferent to the public who were to be the undertakers, at the ſame time, the company by being a few in number, would conſider the object of ſuch importance to themſelves, as to make it worth their utmoſt attention to look after and complete their work perfectly and expeditiouſly, and to make the whole ſo commodious as to render it uſeful and intereſting to the public and themſelves.

Having mentioned the public intereſt, we are hereby reminded of the utility of conſidering, in what point of light the legiſlature may be inclined to view the junction, becauſe it appears that on certain occaſions private intereſts have interfered, and perſuaded parliament to view them in the light of a public intereſt.

The plea of the Newcaſtle miners has been, our nurſery of ſeamen for our navy will be counteracted, by a new ſupply of coals for the London conſumption by this inland navigation; as the plea is very plauſible, and calculated to bring over all ſides of a houſe of commons on the firſt view, we think it of ſome moment to give it a fair inveſtigation.

In the firſt place, the conſideration of the ſmall proportion of theſe 25,000 tons, that might poſſibly be taken from the coaſting trade, conſiſting in articles calculated ſolely to anſwer

the temporary purpoſes of traders in times of war, can form but a very inconſiderable object, which in times of peace muſt vaniſh entirely, by a compariſon of the accumulated inland freights of 20s. on the Thames, and 9s. 6d. on the two canals, with the well known freights from Briſtol to London, ſeldom above 12s. *per* ton, and from Gainſborough 10s. *per* ton.—In times of war no man will diſpute the national advantage from the ſaving of inſurance, and ſometimes the difficulty of communication by ſea.—We will further ſuppoſe the junction is complete, and that 100 barges are ſufficient for the tunnage; theſe are ſeldom navigated by leſs than five men who live at home, have their wives and children, and become a nurſery of population, as well as of hardy men, capable of becoming nearly as good ſeamen, as any in the coaſting trade. But above all it is to be conſidered, that a navigation is a real creation of ſo much property as its annuity can amount to where no property of any kind ſubſiſted before, ſo trifling is the value of lands purchaſed. A navigation is an addition to the hive, an accumulation of labour ſtill productive of more.

Amongſt the many weighty conſiderations which may be offered to parliament, to induce them to facilitate and promote the junction of the Thames and Severn, one is the occaſional communication that would be obtained between the counties of Stafford, Salop and Hereford, where moſt of the cannons and caſtings for the navy and army are run, and whoſe growth of timber is known to be very great. This is certainly an object worthy of our attention, when conſidered as leading

ing directly to facilitate the increaſe of our merchant ſhipping, and to diminiſh the expence of rebuilding our ſhips of war, and therefore ſeems to offer real ground of improvement to our trade and national defence, and on this account may become a judicious inducement with parliament to promote the junction.

It will likewiſe appear that the internal communication, which is to be obtained as the great object of the junction, can in a very ſmall degree interfere with the coaſting trade, when we conſider how much the coaſters can under-rate their tunnage, compared with the neceſſary expence attendant on internal navigations, and a very trifling carriage of coals from ſo diſtant collieries can be expected to interfere in any degree with the coaſters.

Above all other conſiderations, it is be hoped that the legiſlature will maturely weigh it in their minds, that it is true policy in theſe times to promote ſo beneficial a new creation of property, whereby the means of exiſtence, by rendering fuel more eaſily attainable to many counties of the kingdom, is effected; a communication eſtabliſhed to ſupply each county with what the neighbouring counties may afford for the uſe of the manufactures, or for their common neceſſities and improvement of lands, as lime, chalk, dung, ſlate, ores of all kinds, &c. all materials of little value in themſelves, and incapable of ſupporting the expence of land carriage, but all productive of labour, and tending to increaſe property, and thereby, according to their degree, tending to enable counties thus

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benefited better to ſupport the accumulated burden of taxes, to which muſt be added a cheaper conveyance of manufactures to the different places of conſumption.

We will conclude by a few obſervations. From good information we can aver that the navigation of the river Thames, eſpecially between Oxford and Lechlade, is in the moſt unfavourable ſtate poſſible; a circumſtance which the common council of the city of London have well conſidered, by cauſing ſurveys to be made of different parts of the river; a canal from Iſleworth to Maidenhead ſeems to be a meaſure well thought of; it will appear from an inſpection of the map, that a continuation to Reading, and thence to Lechlade, will be a conſequence naturally reſulting from the difficulties which attend the navigation of thoſe upper parts of the river, obſtructed at preſent by ſhoals, by private locks, on a principle as barbarous as the times in which they were firſt made, and totally inadequate to any regular conveyance and reconveyance of merchandize.

It may not be amiſs in this place to offer it to the conſideration of the public, whether under ſuch probable appearances of a continuation of the navigation we have deſcribed, it may not be a matter well worthy of their attention, to reſume the original great idea of compleating the junction upon the ſcale capable of carrying the Severn boats to London.

London is the greateſt port and the firſt mart in the world; the avenues for its facility of circulation cannot be too various,

ous, or too much multiplied; and carriage through them eſtabliſhed on too low terms. The extenſive circulation towards the heart of the kingdom, by means of the public funds, requires as extenſive channels of reconveyance to the members; and the vein of circulation through the Oxford canal navigation, cannot in any ways be impeded by ſo different a channel of communication, as would be that of the junction. The article which gives ſome apparent colour of competition between the junction, and the canal of Oxford, can be no other but coal; but ſome attention to facts will convince unprejudiced perſons of the impoſſibility of this being the caſe, coals being at Glouceſter 9s. *per* ton, which price, with the additional tunnage of the Stroud navigation, and 30 miles new navigation to Lechlade, and the exhorbitant lockage of the Thames would ſcarcely admit of a further conveyance.

If by conſulting the map of England, we attend to the general plan of communication that would follow from the perfection of the junction, and the Oxford canal were they both compleat, it will appear that they would not, in any great degree, interfere ſo as to prejudice each other; for by the junction the communication would be between Staffordſhire, Shropſhire, Worceſter, Hereford, Monmouth, Glouceſter, Wiltſhire, Wales, and the Weſt of England.

The communication by the Oxford canal would be between Cheſhire, Lancaſter, Staffordſhire, Warwick, Derbyſhire, Lincoln, Nottingham, Leiceſter, Warwick, Northampton, Oxford, Bucks, and generally from the Eaſt of England, and both na-

vigations ultimately with the heart of the kingdom, the city of London, and this laſt part of the communication might be regulated on principles of the general public intereſt, and of both navigations; but here we are diſcuſſing intereſts, which we do not know are queſtioned to interfere with each other; but to prevent objections, we wiſh to place every intereſt to the public view in its true ſtate.

The different opinions reſpecting the line of communication between the rivers Severn and Thames, are put into a very proper mode of being ſettled by judging from the real ſtate of facts, which will appear, and no doubt will be examined into, with wiſdom and juſtice; and in caſe the Stroud line ſhould be found the moſt eligible, the terms which will remain to be ſettled with that company, we are told, will be moſt eaſily accompliſhed, as they wiſh to conform to views coinciding with their own and the general intereſt.

If any plauſible arguments, drawn from too limited views of ſociety, ſhould ſtill remain in force againſt inland navigations in general, and in particular againſt the junction of Thames and Severn, we wiſh that ſuch well-wiſhers to the proſperity of the nation would extend their views a little farther, and conſider the whole kingdom as one manufacture, within whoſe walls the greater the number of perſons employed, the greater will be the need of comers and goers to carry out the wares manufactured, and return with the raw materials. The compariſon will hold good to our export trade, the buſier the hive, and the more populous, the greater will

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be the number of foreign travellers in queſt of honey; and at any rate when we conſider the ſmall proportion of tunnage, which might occaſionally be taken from the coaſting trade in the inſtance before us, it can but weigh like a feather in the ſcale when compared with the general addition of circulation to the kingdom, which may reſult therefrom, becauſe the ſaving in point of inland carriage by navigation, ſurpaſſes the ideas of moſt men who have not applied their minds to this moſt uſeful object in ſociety, whereby the landed intereſt is moſt materially improved, and the general means of the kingdom enlarged by new creations of property; thoſe diſtricts where the poor are denied the uſe of fuel, bleſſed with this moſt neceſſary means in our climate; and generations unborn foſtered into life, activity, comfort and happineſs.

From the conſideration of the chain of communications with the northern parts of our iſland, we have been induced to form an idea of the completion of the junction of the rivers Thames and Severn, as an ultimate connecting link with all the inland navigations in the kingdom which is wanting, and have thus far ventured to proceed in laying before the public what has offered itſelf to us upon the ſubject, perfectly aware of our inſufficiency to treat of it in the manner we are ſenſible its importance deſerves; but actuated by a ſincere deſire of promoting whatever may contribute to the welfare of ſociety.

In abler hands the few hints which we have given on the ſubject here treated of, might have been better elucidated, by a faithful detail of the manifold advantages which have been

been derived from connecting by inland navigations; diſtant countries, whoſe intercourſe previous to ſuch facility, ſcarce exiſted, or was effected by expenſive inland carriage, or circuitous navigations; whereby commerce was circumſcribed in proportion to the difficulties ſuſtained, and the expences incurred by the adventurers, in the various products of the countries, forming the extenſive chain of this new communication.

We will beg leave to inſtance the junction of the Mediterranean ſea with the river Garone, whereby the port of Bordeaux has become, ſince its perfection, the mart between the weſtern world, and the ſouthern provinces of France, Italy, the coaſt of Africa, and the ſouthern part of the empire of Germany. That eſſential link of a great chain of communication being propoſed to Louis XIV. met with his approbation, and received as it merited his encouragement and protection until its completion.

If we turn our thoughts to contemplate the ſituation of our capital, with its port, as a central mart between the weſtern world, the future improvements of our ſiſter kingdom of Ireland; our own great and varied manufactures, and the northern parts of Europe, the empires of Germany and of Ruſſia, and the kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Poland; we ſhall view a chain of communication equally extenſive, equally magnificent, and equally incomplete, until this laſt important link be added by the junction of our rivers Thames and Severn.

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We will finiſh theſe conſiderations, by requeſting thoſe of our countrymen, who may ſtill apprehend any particular detriment that may ariſe to their intereſts from ideal and local circumſtances, to extend their views to the general utility, and the advantages which may, and will ariſe to the whole nation, by opening ſuch an artery of communication between the heart of our iſland, and the whole of its commercial connections, eaſtward and weſtward, and to aſſure themſelves that this idea, however it may ſeem to claſh with ſome few private intereſts, is fraught with ſo general an improvement as will make the moſt ample compenſation for ſuch partial inconveniences, and that the public at large being ſo deeply intereſted in its execution, it certainly deſerves the ſerious attention of the legiſlature; and laſtly, that the junction of the rivers Thames and Severn promiſes a ſufficient reward to thoſe men who will ſtep forward, and make the neceſſary exertions for its completion.

THE END.